# MEETING MINUTES LIGNITE RESEARCH COUNCIL

#### March 20, 1997

# Doublewood Inn, Bismarck, ND

# **MEMBERS** (or their authorized alternates) PRESENT:

Dick Bergstad International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, #714

Curtis L. Blohm Knife River Corporation

John Bluemle North Dakota Geological Survey

John Dwyer Lignite Energy Council

Bruce Hagen North Dakota Public Service Commission

Kent Janssen Dakota Gasification Company
Douglas C. Kane MDU Resources Group, Inc.

August Keller The North American Coal Corporation

Merrill Lewis Minnkota Power Cooperative

Russ Nelson Cooperative Power

Harvey Ness U.S. Dept. of Energy - Federal Energy Technology Center

Chuck Reichert BNI Coal, Ltd.

Dave Schmitz

Basin Electric Power Cooperative

Steve Schultz

Otter Tail Power Company

Francis Schwindt North Dakota Health Department

Everett Sondreal Energy & Environmental Research Center

Valdon Swanson

Gordon Westerlind

Ken Zagzebski

North Dakota Farm Bureau

United Power Association

Northern States Power

# **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Lyndon Anderson Lignite Energy Council

Jim Deutsch North Dakota Public Service Commission

Dave Duncan Dakota Gasification Company
Paul Eslinger MDU - Heskett Station

Karlene Fine Industrial Commission of North Dakota

Vicki Gilmore Lignite Energy Council

Don Kirby NDSU - Animal and Range Sciences Department

Alfred Kuhn Dakota Gasification Company

Steve Moorman Babcock & Wilcox

Rick Patzman Montana-Dakota Utilities Company

Clifford R. Porter Lignite Research, Development & Marketing Program

Vicky Steiner Coal Conversion Counties Association

Chairman <u>John Dwyer</u> called the Lignite Research Council (LRC) meeting to order on March 20, 1997, at Doublewood Inn, Bismarck, North Dakota. The first hour of the LRC meeting was a luncheon meeting held jointly with members of the Lignite Energy Council Board of Directors.

### **Updates by Clifford R. Porter**

<u>Clifford Porter</u> discussed goals and objectives of the Lignite Energy Council (LEC) and what they mean to both the LEC and the LRC.

He said the LEC has established a primary objective for involvement in research and development (R & D) activities, to promote the industry and develop R & D and demonstration activities. There are specific objectives in terms of projects to promote the efficient and clean use of lignite, and also to support lignite marketing activities and existing and potential demonstration projects.

Porter said there are marketing studies relating to mercury. The research and development activities are the

small research programs. Some areas of priorities in the small research programs are those that relate to environmental issues, mercury issues relating to  $NO_x$ , carbon dioxide, and also pollution reduction and reducing mining costs.

This year the LRC is facilitating the formation of a joint program involving the LRC, U.S. Department of Energy, Electric Power Research Institute and Energy & Environmental Research Center.

Porter said the LRC is maintaining the existing system of using about 80% of funds for demonstration projects and 20% for research projects. He presented background information about the R & D program. Funding for the Lignite Research, Development and Marketing Program comes from coal severance tax dollars. The coal severance tax is about 77 cents per ton. About 10 cents per ton of that is set aside for research and development activities, at 30 million tons per year of production. Those funds on an annual basis during the 1995-1997 biennium are used for administration, marketing studies funds of \$200,000 set aside per year, research project funds of about \$387,000 per year, and demonstration projects of about \$2.2 million a year. All 31 projects active during the biennium represent a total funding from the state side from the Lignite Research Fund of \$19,258,000. The dollars are not all spent within this biennium. In the Marketing Feasibility Studies area there are 5 projects that have been active. All 5 have been funded and were started in this biennium. There are 23 projects in the Research area, totaling about \$2.5 million. There are 3 projects in the Demonstration Projects area.

Of the 23 Research projects, the Lignite Energy Marketing Plan is included in the \$2.5 million. Of the \$400,000 that has been made available for the Lignite Marketing Feasibility Studies, about \$60,000 remains and has not been committed. There is still \$677,000 appropriated and available in this biennium for Research Projects.

For Demonstration Projects, there is approximately \$3.1 million available. <u>Porter</u> estimated that at end of the biennium, if we take into account the approval of a possible joint program and when the Regional Lignite Marketing Plan funds are made available, there will be about \$2.5 million in the Demonstration Projects area that has not been obligated or committed.

For the Research Program activities (the Small Projects areas) target funding amounts have been established for projects in this biennium: \$410,000 in the environmental issues area; combustion, beneficiation and byproducts: \$234,000 each; reclamation: \$58,000. Still available are \$324,000 for the environmental issues area, \$187,000 for combustion projects, \$90,000 for beneficiation, \$32,000 for byproducts, and about \$43,000 for reclamation projects. In terms of the total amount of money available in the program, there is sufficient to fund all of the projects proposed in Grant Round XXVII.

In the Demonstration area, there is one grant request this grant round for \$1.5 million. <u>Porter</u> said that Babcock and Wilcox sent a letter to LRC members about this grant request.

<u>Porter</u> said there are two Demonstration Projects that the LRC is actively involved with now. The first is the anhydrous ammonia project at Dakota Gasification Company. The Lignite Research Fund amount for this project is about \$12.3 million and the total project cost is about \$112 million. The objective of this project is to diversify the plant. The other Demonstration Project, which has just been approved by the Industrial Commission, is an amended project concerning modifications to the Milton R. Young Station intended to help integrate it with the Center SynCoal Project. The total project cost for the modifications is \$8.2 million. \$4.1 million is the Lignite Research Fund amount.

<u>Update on DGC Synfuels Plant and Anhydrous Ammonia and Ammonium Sulfate Projects</u>

<u>Kent Janssen</u> gave an update on the DGC Synfuels Plant and the anhydrous ammonia and ammonium sulfate projects.

He said gas contract settlements were approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and became effective on Jan. 17, 1997. Right now DGC gets market value for its gas, plus what remains of those settlement payments. Only 30% of the settlement monies are remaining, so instead of DGC getting \$72 million of help

each year, it is getting only \$28 million. Janssen said \$12 million of that \$28 million goes away at the end of five years because DGC did settle two years ago with Natural Gas Pipeline for 20% of the gas. That adds a lot of value to the table because it was settled two years earlier, but we're now in the third year, he said. Of those seven years, DGC has five left. Janssen said DGC will really be taking a hit five years down the road. The combination of what DGC is going to get for settlement payments, plus market value of the gas results in a lot less revenue than what the project has received in the past. That is why DGC went to the Legislature to get some tax help, he said. 20% of the byproducts is exempt from total revenues. DGC is seeking from the Legislature a raise in the amount of exemption for byproducts from 20% to 35%.

<u>Janssen</u> said that DGC would be struggling to find itself at a break-even point for the next five years and beyond the next five years with its current slate of byproducts. DGC is in the process of working with Basin Electric, its parent company, to get some relief from some of its contracts. DGC is taking the position that it is not going to be able to do a CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline project, maintain its customers for byproducts, or maintain key employees if DGC is running at a loss. By modifying contracts with Basin Electric, DGC expects to get some help from Basin so that the next 5 to 7 years do not show losses, Janssen said.

Regarding the two fertilizer projects, <u>Janssen</u> said DGC does not currently have debt. DGC has potential for making additional byproducts. He said that looking at the history of the plant, what DGC has done to prepare itself for this day is make some very large investments. To get our membership to agree to allow us to take money and plow it back into the project is the key to the plant's future, rather than just shutting the plant down or taking those monies and dividing them out to our membership, he said. The goal of all of DGC's investments in byproducts was to attempt to save the plant money. <u>Janssen</u> said DGC no longer gets any help from the gas contracts; all it has is the value of the commodities that it can produce - the natural gas and the various byproducts. If you look at where we have been in the past, this only goes back to 1991 when we got the first big increase in help, he said. So DGC has gone through about \$6 million in byproduct revenues. For 1996 it was up to almost \$25 million. Since July of 1996 DGC has been producing some ammonium sulfate. DGC should be able to produce 350,000 short tons per year of anhydrous ammonia. That plant is just coming on, Janssen said.

Concerning carbon dioxide recovery, he said DGC is very close to having final contracts with PanCanadian. It would be a very steady load that would take a lot of lignite for generating the power for that load. He said that while DGC does not have a signed contract at this point in time, PanCanadian wants to make sure things are in place by April. Janssen said he told PanCanadian DGC needs a little more time to make sure it knows exactly where it stands with the ammonium sulfate scrubber and the anhydrous ammonia project, as well as time to seek some financing for the pipeline project. It will cost \$100 million in capital to do a CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline project, <u>Janssen</u> said.

For revenues, DGC was at \$24 million last year. He said that in an average year beyond this year, DGC should be able to have an average year revenue stream of about \$120 million because of the ammonium sulfate project and the anhydrous ammonia project. Then, if DGC gets a carbon dioxide pipeline project, that would bring it very close to \$150 million in revenues.

Concerning byproduct development, we have Fred Kuhn and Dave Duncan here today if you have questions of them, <u>Janssen</u> said. The cresylic acids that DGC is selling from its phenol solvent stream has been a very good business for DGC. Tar oil, and anode binder pitch to be used for extender are some examples of other byproducts. The LRC has supported us on these projects, Janssen said. Concrete additives using our catechol as a super-plasticizer extend the setting time of concrete, increase concrete's strength, and reduce the viscosity so more water can be removed, he said. DGC is also looking at how to use its catechols for organic intermediates, modifying chemical structure so they can be used as building blocks in flavors like imitation vanilla; fragrances; pharmaceuticals; and pesticides. These are upgraded products that use the same basic building blocks, he added.

<u>Janssen</u> said DGC is going to have to look at the same order of magnitude of investment in byproducts before the plant will be on firm, sound, fiscal ground. It's going to take about as much investment to go forward as was spent in the past to get the plant going.

<u>Janssen</u> was asked about the timetable for the  $CO_2$  pipeline project. He replied that DGC is working toward initial sales in October or November of 1999 To do that, DGC would have to do a lot of up-front work and keep the project on schedule. Orders for the big rotating equipment must be placed by the end of this year, and the pipe must be ordered by next year. Actual construction would occur in 1999. Preliminary work, essentially engineering and procuring, would take place in late 1997 and in 1998.

### **Update by Merrill Lewis and Chuck Reichert on SynCoal Project (Demonstration Project)**

Merrill Lewis said the SynCoal project consists basically of two parts: the facility itself and the modifications, as Clifford Porter mentioned. Basic engineering for both the modification and the facility are forging ahead and are nearly complete. The major procurement and negotiations for the equipment are not complete, but are quite well solidified. The financing on the facility is not totally in place, but we are moving ahead as if they are, Lewis said. Three buildings on the site are being prepped, and we expect to be ready to start in April, he added. There are two proposals for the portion of the funding that NSP and Montana Power have not spoken for, and there are two proposals in hand to support that funding.

<u>Chuck Reichert</u> mentioned that the project must be finished by July 1, 1998 and production must start by that time. <u>Dwyer</u> asked what the "drop dead" date was for the financing. <u>Reichert</u> said it will be April 15, 1997.

<u>Lewis</u> said that approximately 75% of the financing is spoken for. This project is basically driven economically on tax credits, <u>Reichert</u> said. Part of the concern is finding financial backers who have an appetite for tax credits, he added.

### Joint LRC/LEC Board of Directors Meeting Adjourns; LRC-only Meeting Begins

The jointly held luncheon meeting of the Lignite Research Council and the Lignite Energy Council Board of Directors adjourned, and the LRC-only meeting began in the Doublewood Inn's East Heritage Room.

# <u>Updates on Marketing Feasibility Studies; Research Program Activities; Proposed Joint Program with EERC, EPRI and DOE; and Future Grant Rounds</u>

<u>Porter</u> summarized two of the 23 projects in the Research Program area. They are reclamation projects, and both are related. One has to do with the mixing of prime and non-prime topsoil and the other has to do with SPGM (suitable plant growth materials). For both, the research has been accomplished and the research information has been turned over to the mines and regulatory agencies. They're seeking ways to make the SPGM requirement permanent (eliminate the sunset clause), and mining companies are looking at the mixing of prime and non-prime topsoil into the reclamation process. These two projects have finally come down to conclusion, <u>Porter</u> said.

In the Lignite Marketing Feasibility Studies area, <u>Porter</u> chose two to summarize. We have been working on two different areas with regard to the mercury program, he said. One, which is being done by ENSR Consulting, has to do with mercury content emissions, transportation and deposition and the fate of the mercury in the environment. ENSR has completed a draft of their final report. There are a few revisions <u>Porter</u> said he will suggest to them, but essentially the work has been done. ENSR's work has shown what we already know with regard to mercury - that the mercury problem is a global issue. There is a great deal of uncertainty when you are looking at an issue this large, knowing where the fate goes throughout the entire environment, Porter said. The other thing that ENSR is concerned about is that meteorological conditions in the Great Plains states are slightly different than what are seen in most of the EPA studies that address mercury transport and deposition. ENSR suggests it might be necessary for us to continue to evaluate this area, Porter said.

Human health effects of mercury is the topic of the other LMFS that <u>Porter</u> summarized. This has been studied by Roth and Associates. H. Daniel Roth's starting points were the EPA and EPRI data that was available on human health. Roth reviewed about 180 human epidemiological studies. Of those studies he found 25 that he felt worthy of some additional review. His conclusion is that at the levels of mercury that we typically see in the United States, he did not see any adverse effects on human health.

Porter said the possible joint program between the LRC and EERC, DOE or EPRI has been in discussion. Two

primary issues of interest the LRC and these groups have in common are environmental issues and production issues. He has met with DOE and EERC representatives and has had some discussions with EPRI. <u>Porter</u> said he thinks there is a good chance we can put a proposal together that would meet at least some of our common goals by the time of the June 1, 1997 grant round.

<u>Porter</u> said the next grant application deadline date is April 15, 1997. He said the only application he believes will be submitted for that grant round will be from Dakota Gasification Company for the CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline project.

Other grant application deadline dates in 1997 are June 1 and Oct. 1.

The LRC will meet jointly with the LEC Board of Directors at the Doublewood Inn, Bismarck, on July 24, 1997 and December 4, 1997.

# Partners for Affordable Energy (PAE) video

Before the Partners for Affordable Energy (PAE) video was shown by <u>Lyndon Anderson</u>, <u>Dwyer</u> gave background information about it. The state of North Dakota and the LRC, through the LEC, have a marketing program under way to emphasize low-cost, coal-based electricity in Minnesota. This video has to do with the Partners for Affordable Energy, a coalition of government people, labor, business, farm groups, and others for the support of coal-based electricity. This short video is basically a report on one of the Lignite Marketing Feasibility Studies. <u>Dwyer</u> said the video is just one example of some of things PAE has been doing. Others include a slide show and brochures concerning the marketing program.

### **Approval of Minutes**

<u>Dwyer</u> asked for a motion for approval of the last meeting of the LRC, held 12/19/96. <u>Doug Kane</u> made a motion to approve the minutes. Seconded by <u>Chuck Reichert</u>; motion carried. The draft minutes of the Feb. 15, 1997 meeting of the LRC Executive Committee were also included in this LRC meeting book. <u>Dwyer</u> said that at the Dec. 19, 1996 LRC meeting, LRC members gave approval for the LRC Executive Committee to deal with the SynCoal Project's financial package that is being revised. The draft minutes of that Feb. 15, 1997 meeting of the LRC Executive Committee will be approved at its next meeting.

#### **Grant Round XXVII Grant Applications**

<u>Porter</u> summarized Technical Peer Reviewers' comments and gave his Technical Advisor Recommendations for the four Grant Round XXVII project applications, as follows:

LRC-XXVII-A: "Reclaimed Grassland Management for Increased Plant Diversity"; Submitted by Animal and Range Sciences Department of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, and the Lignite Energy Council; Principal Investigators: Donald R. Kirby, Ph.D. and Mario E. Biondini, Ph.D.; Funding Request for \$46,560; Total Project Costs \$156,360

Porter said this proposal has received a commitment for matching funding from the members of the Lignite Energy Council Task Force No. 7. He said the goal of the project is to reduce the time required to meet diversity and seasonality guidelines for reclaimed native grasslands. The objective of the research is to develop livestock grazing and haying strategies to improve plant species diversity and seasonal balance of reclaimed native grasslands. The technical peer reviewers gave the project an average weighted score of 170.3 out of a possible 250 points. As technical advisor, Porter recommended the LRC vote to recommend to the Industrial Commission that the project be funded. He said the project meets some reclamation needs. The issues that were brought up by the technical peer reviewers in terms of the research plan and the management practices can be adequately addressed within the Task Force No. 7 and by the principal investigators, he said. One technical reviewer recommended the project be funded and two recommended that funding may be considered. The LRC members who have a potential conflict of interest in voting on this proposal include the Lignite Energy Council, the North American Coal Corporation, BNI Coal Ltd., Knife River Corporation, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, MDU Resources Group and Minnesota Power.

One of the project's principal investigators, Donald R. Kirby, presented information on behalf of the project.

<u>Bruce Hagen</u> said he had asked Jim Deutsch, the new head of the PSC's Reclamation Division, about this project. Deutsch told Hagen this project was needed.

# LRC-XXVII-B: "Development of Concrete Admixtures From DGC's Catechols"; Submitted by Dakota Gasification Company; Principal Investigator: Alfred K. Kuhn; Funding Request: \$70,000; Total Project Costs: \$144,000

<u>Porter</u> said the project's goal is the development of a new value-added product from Dakota Gasification Company's pitch. The objective is to develop and demonstrate the use of catechols obtained from DGC's pitch to manufacture superplasticizers for concrete admixtures. The market for superplasticizers is about \$50,000,000 annually, said Porter. The project's duration will be 9 to 12 months. Average weighted score from the technical peer reviewers was 183.3 out of 250 points. Two reviewers recommended Fund; one said Funding May Be Considered. The reviewers' comments included: "Project could be strengthened by expert in concrete admixtures". "Phase I is appropriate; Phase II may be premature". <u>Porter</u> said his recommendation is to fund the project. He said project diversification is important to the economic viability of Great Plains. Potential conflict-of-interest parties are DGC, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and The North American Coal Corporation.

<u>Janssen</u> said this is a growing business. <u>Dwyer</u> asked what the gross revenue might be if this project works out. <u>Fred Kuhn</u> replied that one scenario DGC is looking at shows this could be as high as \$35 million. In regard to a technical peer reviewer's comment about the 2-phase approach, Kuhn said that DGC would like to ask for approval of the two phases now so that DGC does not have to go through another grant application process for the second phase.

<u>Janssen</u> said there are just two or three marketers who are very strong in this business on a worldwide basis. DGC would chose one of these, quickly get them on board and have them advise DGC about how to proceed and market these products.

# LRC-XXVII-C: "Phase IV: Proof-of-Concept Demonstration for Engineering Development of Advanced Coal-Fired Low Emission Boiler Systems"; Submitted by Babcock & Wilcox; Principal Investigator: Michael Lukasik; Funding Request: \$1,500,000; Total Project Costs: \$33,091,725

Porter said that Babcock and Wilcox (B&W) sent a letter to all of the LRC members asking them to support this project and to look at the potential of a different funding level. Matching industrial funding would be from B&W. The goal of the project is two-fold. One is participation in the Low Emissions Boiler System (LEBS) development program and the other is allowing the inclusion of North Dakota lignite as part of that program. The objective of the LEBS program is to develop an advanced pulverized coal-fired power generation system. Project duration would be three years. The technical reviewers gave the proposal an average weighted score of 146 out of 250 points. Two of the reviewers said Do Not Fund and one said Funding May Be Considered. The reviewers' comments included: "Consider a reduced scope." "The economics with North Dakota lignite are not fairly addressed." Porter said the reviewers had some concern as to whether this project would actually enhance the use of the North Dakota lignite resource. Porter's recommendation: Do Not Fund. He said he thinks it is important to participate in the development of these types of technology development; however, this project needs a developer or a commitment to see that it would be carried through with regard to North Dakota lignite. He added that it is an interesting technology, but it lacks the necessary business development. There are no conflict-of-interest parties within the LRC membership.

<u>Steve Moorman</u>, a representative of B&W, said he had talked with some of the LRC members personally about the proposal. He said it certainly is a program that has a future, but it looks like it is beyond the scope of what the LRC is looking for. He said he appreciated the LRC's consideration of the proposal.

<u>Dwyer</u> told Moorman the project cannot be funded unless it has matching industry funds. <u>Porter</u> said the project does have matching industrial investment, but it does not have North Dakota participation.

Everett Sondreal said that EERC had received B&W's letter and thought the proposal was very interesting, with

a lot of good research topics . He said the question is whether or not research-quality data on some of the specifics would come out of this project, in particular in reference to steam temperature and the higher steam temperature's effect on North Dakota lignite. Moorman said he really couldn't address that. Sondreal said he had several questions in the research topics area, but since Moorman could not address those, Sondreal said it would be in the interest of the state to have answers to questions that this type of involvement could provide. However, Sondreal said it would require a greater depth of testing and research associated with demonstration than is normally the case.

# LRC-XXVII-D: "Optimizing Performance of the Heskett Station"; Submitted by Energy & Environmental Research Center; Principal Investigator: Michael D. Mann; Funding Request: \$55,000; Total Project Costs: \$183,000

<u>Porter</u> said the goal of the project is to improve the operation of the Heskett Station bubbling fluidized-bed combustor. The objective is to improve the overall efficiency, improve sulfur capture and reduce costs. The approach is to replace river sand (which is now used) with limestone in the bubbling fluidized-bed combustor.

Project duration: 9 months. The technical peer reviewers gave the proposal a 194.3 average weighted score out of 250. Two reviewers recommended Fund; one recommended Funding May Be Considered. Technical reviewers' written comments included: "Project may preserve existing markets. It is an excellent project." As technical advisor to the LRC, <u>Porter</u> said his recommendation is Fund. He said this project is appropriate for the Heskett Station, and it contains the potential for environmental as well as operational improvements. Possible conflict of-interest parties within the LRC membership are Knife River Corporation, MDU Resources Group and EERC.

John Dwyer asked if <u>Rick Patzman</u> or <u>Paul Eslinger</u>, both of MDU, wanted to comment on this proposal. <u>Eslinger</u> said that they believe the more competitive they are, the more lignite they will burn. This project would address that, and the project is important to the continued operation of the Heskett Station, he said.

<u>Sondreal</u> added that yes, we can test for agglomeration (a question posed by one of the technical peer reviewers in written comments). A second written comment had to do with the fact that limestone's performance is difficult to predict. Sondreal said EERC agrees with that statement, and that is why there were two different limestones tested.

<u>Dwyer</u> asked if there were any questions for Eslinger or Sondreal. <u>Kane</u> said he was going to vote that the project be funded.

#### **Distribution of Conflict-of-Interest Forms and Ballots**

Dwyer asked Karlene Fine to distribute the ballots as well as conflict-of-interest forms for those LRC members who had not already signed them.

### **Other Matters**

### **R&D** Administrative Budget Adjustment

<u>Dwyer</u> referred to Section VIII in the LRC meeting book, concerning reallocation of portions of the Administrative Budget so that \$19,500 be reallocated from the R & D Finance Plan line item to the Industrial Commission/LRC Expenses line item. (The current IC/LRC Expenses Budget is at \$75,000; the reallocation to amend it would make it \$94,500, thus basically rearranging the line items that are already in the Administrative Budget. This is not increasing the budget, but it is a change to cover legal costs that had primarily to do with the externalities proceedings.) Dwyer asked for a motion to approve the adjustment to increase the current IC/LRC expenses budget from \$75,000 to \$94,500. Moved by <u>Bruce Hagen</u>; seconded by <u>Curt Bluhm</u>. Motion carried.

# Petition for Rehearing Before the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

<u>Dwyer</u> gave an update on the externalities proceedings (the petition for rehearing before the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission). On March 27, 1997, there will be a petition for rehearing on the externalities issue before

the Minnesota PUC. The North Dakota Attorney General will go to that hearing and argue on behalf of the state as well as the lignite industry. <u>Dwyer</u> added that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and others have attacked the 200-mile exclusion for  $CO_2$  penalties that is in the existing order. He said we have responded to that and will be arguing before the Minnesota PUC.

# **Possible June LRC Meeting**

Dwyer said there is a possibility a meeting of the LRC will be scheduled for close to June 1, 1997, which is 45 days after the grant application deadline date of April 15, 1997. If there is a grant application, LRC members will be notified of the meeting date.

# **Legislative Update**

Dwyer said that SB 2015, which includes the R & D budget, is in good shape at this point in the 1997 Legislative session. Another bill, HB 1133, would extend the Lignite Research Program. There was a sunset in there of 1999. <a href="Dwyer">Dwyer</a> said this has been taken out, so the Legislature has basically determined the Lignite Research Program is a good one. He said the legislators want the "marriage" to continue between the lignite industry and the state of North Dakota. The bill has passed and has been signed by the Governor.

# **Confidential Balloting for Grant Round XXVII Proposals**

The LRC cast confidential ballots to either recommend or deny funding of the Grant Round XXVII proposals. Balloting results are to be presented to the Industrial Commission for consideration when it reviews these proposals. The LRC votes were as follows:

LRC-XXVII-A: 19 - Fund; 0 - Do Not Fund LRC-XXVII-B: 18 - Fund; 1 - Do No Fund LRC-XXVII-C: 1 - Fund; 18 - Do Not Fund LRC-XXVII-D: 19 - Fund; 0 - Do Not Fund

### Adjournment

Dwyer called for a motion for adjournment of the meeting. <u>August Keller</u> so moved; seconded by <u>Kane.</u> Motion carried.

Vicki Gilmore, Recording Secretary